

Frederiks Lutheran Church
Norregade
Charlotte Amalie
St. Thomas
Virgin Islands

HABS No. VI-80

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FREDERIKS LUTHERAN CHURCH

HABS No. VI-80

Location: Norregade, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The church was built in 1793. The congregation was descended from the earliest Danish group which first worshipped in the fort. During the great fire of 1825, which destroyed 1,200 buildings in Charlotte Amalie, all but the walls of this church was destroyed. The church was rebuilt with Gothic Revival details.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Condition: Apparently continuously well maintained. Renovated 1956; all masonry pointed and painted. Structural features show good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Approximately 85' x 60'.
2. Foundations: Sandstone masonry with lime plaster.
3. Wall construction: Brick face in English bond. Interior of walls brick and stone rubble. East and west gable ends covered with a lime plaster painted yellow. Modern lean-tos at rear flanking the apse arm are concrete block with cement plaster painted yellow. Brick is a buff color. Set in lime mortar. Trim painted white.
4. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Monumental front entrance under bell tower makes south arm of cross. Round-arched doorway flanked by brick pilasters. Double plank double exterior door vertical planks outside and horizontal inside. One standard wood frame door leads from each modern lean-to.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Two tiers and three bays of windows on each side wall of nave. Two bays and two tiers of windows on south wall of nave at either side of bell tower. Lower windows round-arched with double plank exterior shutters, vertical outside and horizontal inside, and three panel jalousie interior shutters with adjustable louvers. Upper tier of windows in gable ends have catenary arches and double plank exterior shutters, vertical outside and horizontal inside, and two panel jalousie interior shutters with adjustable louvers. The upper tier of windows in north and south walls have same width as lower windows, flat brick arches, double plank exterior shutters,

vertical outside and horizontal inside, and no interior shutters. An exception occurs on north wall where the two inside windows, flanking the apse are bricked up and recessed one brick width inside the exterior wall surface and painted white.

The top portion of the bell tower, above the eave line of the nave, has one window on each of the east, south and west walls; round arches and double plank exterior shutters, vertical outside and horizontal inside.

All windows have a molded stone sill painted white. All arches are flush brick with a projecting keystone, except on the flat arches and in the tower windows.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Main roof over nave is a saddle with ridge running east-west and five ornamental timber trusses, two butting against masonry gable end walls. The four bays thus formed have seven horizontal purlins on each slope and seven rafters in each bay supporting wood planking. Exterior is sheathed in corrugated metal.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Heavy molded cornice runs around bell tower and across south walls between upper and lower tiers of windows. All eaves have gutters that empty into cistern that forms large masonry block in southwest corner of cross and reaches to just below nave floor line. Gable end and bell tower have a parapet with decorative crenellations emphasized at the corners of the bell tower and at the ridge and eave of the gables with an enlarged finial with a hipped cap and a cornice molding with dentil course. The outer sides of each corner crenellation has a frame about a simple cross in brick relief. Crown band under crenellations on tower (but not on gable ends) has a dentil course beneath it.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: Broad side of nave runs east-west and faces street. Bell tower over entrance and apse at the middle of the south and north walls respectively, each about one half of the width of the nave, complete the modified cross. Lean-tos on north wall flank the apse.
2. Stairways: Two identical stairs on either side of entrance lead to gallery extending across back and sides of nave. A ladder stair continues up from gallery level to the top level of bell tower. Bell is supported by heavy timber framing.

Inscription on bell reads "BOCHUMER VEREIN GUSS STAHL FABRIK 1871."

3. Flooring: Heavy wood planking in nave and gallery. Altar and nave across altar end paved with cement tile of simulated black and white marble.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls have plaster painted a light green. Ceiling shows the varnished wood structure.
5. Doorways and doors: Two doors on the north wall of the nave opposite outer two windows on south wall have double doors of same construction as interior shutters and are three-panelled, upper two panels containing movable louvers. In each opening above doors are two-leaf shutters with two panels of fixed louvers. Between altar and door at east is a shuttered window matching all the other windows. Corresponding on west side is a panelled door to the elevated pulpit. All these openings lead to the lean-to rooms flanking the apse. All have round arches glazed with brightly colored glass matching the red, pink, yellow, blue and green of the windows in the arches over the rest of the lower windows.
6. Trim (and interior woodwork): Gallery is wood supported on ten octagonal columns. Balustrade of wood. Box pews in nave of wood. Pews and gallery painted a light chocolate. Altar, altar railing, and raised lectern are varnished.
7. Hardware: Miscellaneous altar peices. Heavy wrought-iron strap hinges on pintles (three on each side of main entrance double door and two on each shutter (outside double plank). Large wrought-iron box lock on main door, inside and outside wrought-iron hooks, and wrought-iron brackets with wood cross bars on main door and all outside shutters. Small brass latches on box pew doors.
8. Lighting: Large ornate cast-iron chandelier hanging from center of nave ceiling to six-and-a-half feet above floor. Painted gilt with electric bulbs simulating candles. Simple electric fixtures on each gallery column and above each column on the gallery rail.

D. Site:

General setting: Free standing and set back from Norregade on the slope just above the base of Government Hill looking toward Fort Christian in Charlotte Amalie.